

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS SP, MO

SUBJ: US ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO

REF: (A) STATE 15808; (B) STATE 21870

1. CHARGE ACCOMPANIED BY POL COUNSELOR, BRIEFED MFA UNDER SECRETARY ROVIRA JAN 31 ON DETAILS OF PROSPECTIVE US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO MOROCCO USING INFORMATION PROVIDED IN REFTELS. ALSO PRESENT WITH ROVIRA AT MEETING WERE MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS (FERRER) AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS (PERINAT). CHARGE CONCLUDED BRIEFING BY RESTATING THAT USG POLICY OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO MOROCCO WAS ALSO IN SPAIN'S INTEREST SINCE IT WOULD HELP SUPPORT HASSAN'S MODERATE REGIME AND SINCE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE SOURCES WOULD BE WORSE (PARA THREE OF REFTEL.) CHARGE REEMPHASIZED THAT KING HASSAN HAD ASSURED US OFFICIALS THAT THESE ARMS WOULD NOT BE USED AGAINST FRIENDS OF US. AND THAT AMOUNTS WERE MODEST AND STRETCHED OUT OVER TIME.

2. MFA OFFICIALS LISTENED CAREFULLY AND TOOK DETAILED NOTES. AT CONCLUSION OF BRIEFING ROVIRA NOTED THAT KING HASSAN'S PROMISE OF NON-USE AGAINST FRIENDS WAS DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL STATEMENT RATHER THAN EXPLICIT CONDITION ATTACHED TO PROVISION OF ARMS AND ASKED WHAT WOULD BE POSITION OF U.S. IF EQUIPMENT USED AGAINST SPAIN IN SPAITE OF HIS ASSURANCES. IN THIS CONNECTION, PERINAT INTERJECTED

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THAT MOROCCANS WERE PRONE TO MAKE SUCH PROMISES AND THEN

FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THEM. POL COUNSELOR COMMENTED THAT NO ONE COULD SAY WHAT U.S. WOULD DO IN SUCH HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION BUT THAT SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES IN PAST HAD SHOWN THAT THERE WERE ACTIONS U.S. COULD TAKE IF UNDERSTANDINGS ON ARMS SALES CLEARLY VIOLATED, SUCH AS SUSPENSION OF DELIVERY OF ITEMS DUE OR REFUSAL TO PROVIDE SPARE PARTS UNTIL MATTER CLARIFIED. CHARGE SAID SPAIN COULD BE MORE CONFIDENT OF TYPE OF POSITION OR ACTION U.S. WOULD TAKE IN SUCH SITUATION THAN OF THAT WHICH OTHER POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS MIGHT TAKE.

3. FERRER QUESTIONED SIGNIFICANCE OF KING'S ASSURANCES NOT TO USE ARMS AGAINST "FRIENDS OF U.S.", NOTING THAT TALL COUNTRIES AGAINST WHICH MOROCCO COULD CONCEIVABLY USE THESE WEAPONS COULD FIT THAT DESCRIPTION. ROVIRA, HOWEVER, TURNED CONVERSATION TO ANOTHER SUBJECT BEFORE FERRER COULD PURSUE THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT. PERINAT THEN RAISED QUESTION AS TO WHAT EXTENT RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS ON USE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT STIPULATED IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT WOULD APPLY TO THOSE ARMS THAT MOROCCO WOULD FINANCE WHOLLY OR PARTLY WITH U.S. CREDITS. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHICH MILITARY ITEMS ALREADY ACQUIRED OR IN PLANNING STAGE WERE THROUGH DIRECT CREDITS AS OPPOSED TO CASH SALES. CHARGE SAID HE WOULD CHECK TO SEE IF ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON HOW CREDIT HAD BEEN AND WOULD BE APPLIED.

4. ROVIRA ALSO ASKED TO WHAT EXTENT, IF AT ALL, THE USSR AND/OR OTHER COUNTRIES WERE ALSO NOW SUPPLYING ARMS TO MOROCCO. CHARGE SAID HE DID NOT HAVE SPECIFIC INFO ON THIS POINT, AND USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASIZE THAT WE HOPED OUR PROGRAM WOULD PRE-EMPT OTHER, LESS RELIABLE SUPPLIERS.

5. CHARGE STRESSED AT BEGINNING OF BRIEFING AND AGAIN AT END THAT PROVISION OF SUCH DETAILED INFORMATION ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIRD COUNTRY WAS NOT COMMON PRACTICE AND SHOULD BE TREATED WITH GREATEST RESERVE.

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6. COMMENT: MFA OFFICIALS MANNER DURING DISCUSSION AT BEST WAS SOBER. BELIEVE WE CAN EXPECT FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS FOR FURTHER DETAILS OR CLARIFICATION. MEANWHILE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AS TO RESTRICTIONS ON USE AND RESALE OF ITEMS AND HOW CREDIT HAS BEEN AND IS TO BE APPLIED.
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